

Don't Call Me Sweetheart (DreamnotFound)

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Don't Call Me Sweetheart (DreamnotFound)

by [passmethemolly](#)

Summary

A fic in which George finally gets flown down to Florida and a friendly flirting competition breaks out. But it's just dudes being homies right? Then why does it begin to feel real?

Mature for language use.

Notes

hello again!! I'm excited about this (it'll be less angsty, more of a cute fluffy pick me up fic) so if you guys like it let me know :)

follow me on twitter! i love to interact w yall: @passmethemo11y

Disclaimers:

i do not live in Florida and this town is completely fictional. excuse any inaccuracies!

!!!! I love and respect both Dream and George and this is no way meant to make them uncomfortable, this is purely for entertainment. I will remove any content that they deem weird or uncomfortable to them, I do not want to hurt their friendship in any way. !!!!

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Getting into the passenger seat of Clay's car felt like a fever dream to George. They have always joked around about Clay flying George to Florida to experience American life and to see each other, but now that it was actually happening, it feels illegal. He felt like he was trespassing on private property.

As George fidgeted out of his thick blue sweatshirt (it was freezing in England when he left, but he felt close to melting in Florida), Clay was drumming his hands on the steering wheel excitedly as he pulled away from the pickup curb of the airport.

"Why the hell is it so hot?" George groans and he pushes his hair away from his forehead, slightly impressed that Clay was wearing jeans in this heat.

"It's not hot, it's just muggy," Clay clarifies. He had a huge smile on his face and he kept turning his head to look at George, who was too busy fiddling with the air vents to notice. "George!"

"What?"

"You're here! In Florida!"

"I hope so, that's where we agreed to meet," George said. He felt dizzy not driving even though his mind was telling him he should be since he was sitting in the English driver's seat. And also Clay was going super fast on the highway to the town, which concerned him just a bit and didn't ease his foggy head.

"George! Let me look at you," Clay said, using his other hand to playfully hit George's shoulder and landing a few solid whacks.

"Focus on driving! I would like to not die since I just got here," George laughs, shying away from his friend's slaps and he looks out the window. Florida was pretty or at least it appeared that way right now. The sky was clear with a bright blue and palm trees were scattered alongside the road, the ocean horizon just barely visible to George.

George feels the car speed up a bit. "I have so much to show you. So many American candies to try, I need to teach you how to find shark teeth and I also-"

"Whoa, let's relax here. I just landed." George said. Clay shrugs dismissively and pulls down his sunglasses from his blonde hair. "Let me at least drop my stuff off at the hotel first before you drag me around the town."

"Hotel?"

"Yeah, you were supposed to help me book one remember? We called and looked at places?"

"Oh," Clay says, a heavy pause fills the car for a moment.

"Clay, you're joking." George gapes.

"I didn't realize you wanted me to book you one!"

"I Pay-Paled you money to cover the cost for the week!" George yells and he sinks down in his seat. "So I don't have a room."

"Yes...?"

"You're fucking kidding me- Clay!" George yells and Clay can't help but wheeze a bit.

"Don't worry! It's okay, you ca-"

"How is it okay? I don't have a place to sleep and I'm exhausted and I want to shower."

"You didn't let me finish," Clay said, the big smile never faltering. "You can just sleep at my place, I don't care."

"No, I'm not doing that."

"What!? Come on, it'll be so fun. Why not, George?"

"One: I don't want to invade your privacy and two: if it ever got out, you know it would be fan service," George quirks his eyebrow up at his friend.

"Okay, no. It won't get out, we're fine." Clay laughs and he turns on to a road off to the side. "And second of all, if it was invading my privacy I wouldn't have offered it. I would actually feel better knowing I didn't just dump you in a random hotel."

"Are you sure?" George asks uncertainly. He felt guilty. Clay had already paid for the flight, now he was housing him, and he was giving George a personal tour of the Florida town.

"Yes! It's fine, no rules, and totally stressfree." Clay said as they pull in front of a tan apartment complex, wooden stairs reaching to the high front door and George could see a small cat face in the window.

"No rules, huh?" George says. Wet air hits his cool skin as he pushed open the door, reminding him of the vast climate change from London and he can feel himself start sweating again.

"Okay there's one rule on top of all the standard rules," Clay said as he pulled George's suitcase from the trunk of his car.

"Which is?"

"You can't fall in love with me."

George freezes for a second, staring at his friend's green eyes, and confused about how he was supposed to react.

"O-okay? No problem?" George said and Clay wheezes.

It takes them a hot minute to get the suitcase up the flight of stairs, George borderline passing out from hauling it up, but they reach the front door and stumble in. Patches, Clay's cat, meows in annoyance at the stranger in the apartment. It was a tiny one but still a bit bigger than George's flat in England. The kitchen was tucked in the corner that opened up into the living room. A bedroom was tucked off in the left where the cat disappeared into once George started walking around.

"You know I was just kidding about the rule right? I don't know why I said that." Clay said. He leaned against the counter and watched George touch the little knick-knacks on the shelves.

"Hm? Oh yeah, totally."

"Okay, good."

"I mean, not like it matters because it's not like I was going to anyways."

"What? Fall in love with me?"

"Yeah, you make it easy to hate you."

Clay laughs in disbelief and George turns to him, grinning. "Tough talk coming from someone who can't even say 'I love you' on stream."

"That's because it's weird. I don't like having to be pressured to say things like that," George points out, turning Clay's tiny Rubix Cube in his hands.

"Point taken," Clay says, biting the inside of his cheek and thinking. "Okay, but I bet I could get you to have a crush on me."

"Clay, that just goes against the rule you laid out," George said, dodging a very obvious conversation he didn't want to have.

"Yeah, but I was joking and now I'm determined."

"No, you shouldn't be. You're not going to make me like you."

"Sure, okay. Maybe not like me, but at least make you blush," Clay said.

"You can certainly try but don't tire yourself out," George laughs and moves to stand across from Clay. The two study each other for a moment, Clay searching George's face for any hint of regret or uncomfortableness. He knew George enough to know that stuff like this can do a toll on him. Sensitive topic and all that.

"Why don't we make it a competition then?" Clay suggests with a quick shrug. George raises his eyebrows in curiosity.

"How would that work?"

"The first person to make the other person flustered or tap out wins...uh-" Clay looks around him for something to give away. His eyes land on one of his yearbooks on the bookshelf.

"Wins what?"

"Okay, if you tap out or get flustered to the point where you can't respond or you get that dumb smile on your face-"

"What dumb smile?" George asks.

Clay presses on. "I get to text or call someone random from your contacts and say whatever I want."

"Okay? And what if I win?" George said after a moment of hesitating. Even though George knew it was really stupid to agree to Clay's bets, his competitive side couldn't resist the challenge.

"If you win and you get me flustered or make me tap out," Clay said and he strides over the bookshelf, pulling out a yearbook. "You get to look through my yearbook photos and post one on Twitter."

Tongue in cheek, George stands there for a moment and weighs his options heavily. He could push his pride aside, agree to this, and add a bit of spice to his vacation. If their friendship was strong

enough to withstand the months of shipping and the comments made about each other, surely it was strong enough to withstand a few days of fake flirting.

"Doesn't have to be genuine flirting, right?" George asks his friend.

"I mean if you don't want it to be. But speak for yourself," Clay winks.

"That was really bad. Don't ever wink at me again," George deadpans and sticks out his hand to shake on it. Clay barks out a laugh and the two give a hard shake to seal the deal.

"Game on."

Chapter Notes

im gonna try again with the daily updates :)

If George could describe Clay's flirting style in two words, they would have to be awful and cheesy. The first pick-up line Clay threw at him caught him off guard and almost got him to crack, but only because it was out of the blue and Clay was in his personal bubble.

"George," Clay had said the next morning, sliding on the kitchen tiles and bumping into George's shoulder. "Ask me what my shirt is made out of."

"Why?" George said. He was too busy trying to figure out Clay's coffee maker and Lord knows he needed another cup. Stupid jet lag.

"Just ask what it is."

"I don't know, is it cotton or something?" George asked with a quick glance at Clay's white t-shirt and he smiled as coffee started pouring into his mug underneath the machine.

"No, you have to ask me what my shirt is made of."

"Uh, okay?" George said, taking a sip of coffee. "What's your shirt made of?"

Clay leans in a bit closer. "Boyfriend material."

George inhales and chokes on coffee, the drink burning the back of his throat and he coughs violently as Clay bursts out laughing.

"What the hell was that? You looked that up didn't you?" George said once he recovered from his coughing fit. Clay was still wheezing, bracing himself against the counter and trying to catch his breath.

"Oh my god, that has to count George. You literally choked because of the pick-up line- come on! Don't walk away," Clay giggles. George started to walk into the living room, mug cupped tightly to his chest, and Patches darts between his legs.

"It doesn't count and that was terrible."

"Well at least I'm making an effort here. You haven't done anything yet," Clay said.

"That's because I can't flirt."

"Neither can I, but I'm already doing it way better than you."

"No, you really aren't."

"Did that really not get you though?" Clay asks, taking a seat next to George on the couch.

"Nope."

"Not even a little?"

"No." Lie. It got him a little bit. Only because he wasn't expecting it though.

Clay groans in defeat and George grins. He knew he would have to make some flirty comment soon or Clay was never going to let this go, he would let this stupid bet drag on until one of them broke. It didn't matter if George was all the way in London or if he was six feet under, Clay would hunt him down and hold him to the bet.

"Hurry up and get dressed, today marks the beginning of your Florida tour," Clay says.

Turns out the tour was just Clay showing George a bunch of tacky tourist shops filled to the brim with cheap jewelry, clothes, and beach toys.

"Uh, Clay?" George said as they walked into the first store. "Why are we here?"

"I am initiating you into American tourist culture," Clay responds, heading to the back of the store. It was cluttered and hard to walk through but it had just enough room down the center to make a narrow path. Shelves were filled with all sorts of souvenirs and decorative seashells.

"How's that meant to work?"

"Oh, you'll see. I just need to find it."

Strange. George continues to shuffle around the shop, a little old woman standing behind the counter and watches the boys with a smile. The heat wasn't as bad today and there was a wonderful breeze outside that carried the sweet summer air through the shop.

"Hey Clay, why don-" George turns to where he last saw his friend, expecting him to still be at the back of the shop, but he ends up running right into Clay's chest.

"Whoa! Sorry, man. I'm behind you," Clay laughs, a strong hand gripping George's shoulder to steady him.

George rolls his eyes. "Whatever, it's fine. Did you find what you were looking for?"

"Yes! Are you ready?" Clay asks, arms pinned behind his back and hiding whatever it was behind him.

"Just show me!"

"Ta-da!" Clay announces and he pulls out a grey hoodie with LIFEGUARD written in bold across the chest. "This hoodie is like a trademark for all beachside tourists."

George takes the sweatshirt, the material heavy and soft in his hands. Personally, he believed that Florida shouldn't sell sweatshirts since it was already way too fucking hot and there was no point in wearing one.

"I don't want to look like a tourist though?"

"Too bad, it's what you are. Embrace it, George."

"I'll get it only if you get one too."

"You want to match with me, George? Aw, that's so sweet," Clay teases, jabbing a finger in his shoulder and pushing.

"Yeah, actually. Grey is your color," George tries, but it comes out awkward and in a jumble. An embarrassed flush crawls to his neck as Clay blinks at him.

"You're just saying that because you're colorblind and don't know the actual color of things," Clay said after a minute and George relaxes his shoulders bit, relieved Clay wasn't weirded out by the comment.

"Okay, sure."

"Dude, you missed out on another flirting opportunity."

"What?" George said and he gathers the hoodie in his arms. "How?"

"You could've said: 'Oh Clay, I don't need to see color to know that you look good in everything!'. That would've worked." Clay said and George pushed past him.

"Are you getting the hoodie or not?"

"Wow, you really are bad at flirting. I got this challenge in the bag!" Clay said. George groans at him and Clay chuckles, disappearing in the back again to grab another sweatshirt.

Once the two leave the shop and continue walking down the street, dipping into a few more shops here and there, Clay suddenly grabs George's hand and pulls him to a sharp left and drags him to a small dock area. He thought he was being kidnapped for a second.

"Little fun fact about the town, some of it is built on the water. I used to come here all the time with my family and go boating during the summer." Clay explains. George blinks at the hidden dock area, only a handful of people were here and were working on tall sailboats or lounging out on boat decks. The water looked a murky green here but as George looked out further it faded into a blue. The deck itself was rickety, swaying lightly with the waves and George didn't trust it one bit.

Clay continues to pull him down the dock, George was grateful to be blindly lead because he couldn't get his eyes off of the ocean. Living in London was cool and all and George liked it there, but seeing the ocean was a rare occurrence.

"Oh shit," Clay said and he stops abruptly, causing George to run into him again. Clay still had a firm grip on his hand as he turned to his friend. "I think I'm lost."

"Lost? How did you lose us? Didn't you literally grow up here?" George sighs and looks around at the other people. "Alright hang on, should we ask-"

"Can you give me directions to your heart?"

George presses his lips together as the pick-up line clicks in his head, and he takes his hand out of Clay's. "Haha, very good."

"Did I get you?" Clay's face lit up.

"No! Your pick-up lines are terrible," George laughs and Clay laughs with him.

"Worth a shot, I guess." He said and he moves to the edge of the dock, looking into the water and leans over it with a hand gripping the wooden pillar next to him.

"...Are you going to jump in?" George asks his friend. Clay looks back to George as a salty breeze

picks up, ruffling Clay's blonde hair up and his green eyes were bright from the sun. George feels the air rush out of him for a second and his pulse flutters.

"No! Come look at the water," Clay says gently and George walks to the edge. He follows Clay's lead and leans forward until he can see their reflections in the water. He watches for a minute and squits.

"What am I supposed to be looking at?" George said. He sees Clay turn to him in the reflection.

"Do you not see the fish?"

"No?"

"Lean in closer."

"No, I don't trust you. You're going to push me in."

"What? No! I'm being serious, do you not see them?" Clay wheezes and he leans forward more. Clay was making George nervous.

"Okay! Chill, don't accidentally fall in or something." George said. He takes his arm and pushes his friend's chest back a bit.

"Aw, you care about me! How sweet of you, Georgie."

"Yeah, it would suck to have a shark eat you. You are my tour guide and all."

"There are no sharks around, trust me," Clay said, taking a seat and letting his legs hang off the dock.

"How do you know? Is it your Florida man sixth sense?"

"Ah, you're funny George."

"I get that a lot."

Clay looks up at him, raising his eyebrow. "Wow, and modest too." He pats the deck next to him. "Sit."

George takes a seat next to him but keeps his legs tucked up. He didn't trust Florida's waters. The two fall into a comfortable silence, George staring out at the shimmering water while Clay tipped his head back and basks in the strong sun.

"What other pick-up lines do you have?" George asks as a sailboat passes in a distance.

Clay snorts. "Like I'll tell you. Why do you want to know anyway? Are you going to steal them?"

"No, just curious."

"Just admit you like them, George."

"I don't!"

"Sure."

"Seriously, Clay. I don't."

"I'll tell you one if you make an effort to flirt with me right now." Clay said. George hated how confident and causal he sounded saying that, like flirting with your friends was normal.

"Nevermind, not worth it then." George retorts and Clay turns his head, the two boys looking at each other.

"It's only weird if you make it. Now flirt with me."

"Demanding much?"

"Stop stalling."

George whines. "I don't want to, I'm not good though."

"Do you think I'm good then?" Clay asks and George freezes for a moment. No comment. "Come on, dude. Just call me cute or something and I'll tell you a pick-up line. Stop being weird."

"Okay! Fine." George said. He rubs his sweaty hands on his knees, wracking his brain for any ideas.

"George-"

"I'm thinking! Hang on."

Clay gives a gentle laugh and tilts his head back up towards the sun, sharp shadows falling on his features and another breeze sweeps through. George needed something that was mellow enough to match the vibe, but also something that could definitely pass for flirting. Clay did say to call him cute, could that work?

"Okay, you ready?" George said and Clay looks at him again.

"Hit me."

"You look...cute... in the sun?" George says. It came out more like a question.

"Thanks, George. You don't look bad yourself," Clay says smoothly.

"How do you do that?" George replies and tosses his hands in the air. "How do you just say stuff like that without thinking?"

"I've had girlfriends before, duh."

"Whatever- just tell me the pick-up line."

"Alright, um-" Clay thinks for a moment, and his face lights up. "Okay! Are you sure you're not tired?"

"I'm fine, you watched me drink like three mugs of coffee-"

"Because you've been running through my mind all day," Clay says and adds a quick wink. George begins to say something, but he just shakes his head.

"I want to push you in right now." George manages to say and Clay wheezes loudly.

"I thought I had you for a second! You were sitting there like-" He mocks an expression of surprise. George shoves him hard.

"Shut up, idiot. I honestly thought you would have better ones but I was wrong."

"When aren't you wrong?"

"Keep talking and I'll leave you to the sharks," George threatens but he bursts out laughing.

The two boys sit there in the sun and watch the boats pass, Clay throwing in quick stories and George making side comments about some of the weird people out boating. Clay would continue to throw several more pick-up lines at George, who would roll his eyes and scoff and pretend he didn't feel his heart jump at each and every one of them. Clay would pretend he didn't notice himself slowly gravitate to George on the dock until their shoulders lean against each other. Both of them pretend not to notice that Clay's hand stays on top of George's until they head back into the town, matching sweatshirts in their arms and gentle smiles on their faces.

George has been in an aquarium a solid three times in his life. So when Clay drove them an hour to the next town to go see what he called 'the ultimate' one, George wasn't expecting too much. However, as Clay speed through the parking lot and into the parking space, George could see why Clay gave it that title.

George shielded his eyes from the sun and looked at the biggest aquarium he has ever seen. It was high up on wooden stilts, the brilliant blue sea rolling just behind it, and crowds of people flowing in and out.

"I- whoa." George was speechless. Clay stood next to him grinning up at the building.

"Pretty cool right? Wait until you get inside." Clay said. George stood there for a second longer before following Clay up the stairs and into the cool, dark building. Neon lights ran through the ceiling and showered the boys in purple light as soothing music plays throughout the building. Large tanks stood on either side of them with tiny fish and coral as they waited in line.

"This is certainly something," George said after a moment of silence.

"I've always liked it here. There are a lot of memories attached here," Clay responds, looking up at the lights.

"Like?"

"This is where I had my first date first of all," Clay said. His looks down at George and a playful smirk breaks out on his face.

"Did you bring me here just to say that? Because it didn't work."

"Psh, no." Yes. "I brought you here because every Florida tourist has to visit this aquarium when they come to town."

George rolls his eyes but turns to the back to the tank and watches the fish dart around. He has never been really interested in ocean stuff. He thought the ocean was gross in all honestly, but hopefully, today would prove him wrong.

As the boys get the tickets and head into the main part, the room opened up and displayed floor to wall tanks filled with shimmery fish and blue water. The place was quiet though, everyone mutually agreeing to talk in hushed voices as they gazed at the animals.

"Come here," Clay says in a low voice to George, taking his hand and giving it a small pull. He leads George into a different area to the side. It was a small room with a smaller tank and lush seaweed.

"What is it?" George asks as Clay stops in front of the tank. George tries to peer through the dark glass and he turns to Clay, who was standing surprisingly close to him. He stepped away a bit.

"It reminded me of you," he says to his friend, pointing into the back corner of a tank. George squints at it and can vaguely make out a dark blob.

"Okay, but I can't see it." George states. Clay lets go of his hand and placed his hands on either side of George's head, moving it slightly until George was looking into the eyes of a resting octopus.

"I knew I had to bring you here," Clay says again. "Because it reminded me of you."

"...An octopus?"

"Yes."

"I remind you...of an octopus?"

"I mean, how can it not?" Clay laughs and points to the animal's large head. "You both have big heads and beady eyes."

George slaps his friend's arm. "Shut up, at least I don't look like an eel."

"Do you even know what an eel looks like?"

"Obviously, do I look like an idiot?"

"Do you want me to answer that?"

"Oh my god, Clay," George said but a small laugh gets into his words. The two begin walking through the hallways and silently admiring the sea creatures through the glass.

"You know, my first date here went pretty badly," Clay mentions as they stroll up the main area where the petting pool was.

"Why? What did you do?"

Clay scoffs. "Why do you assume it's my fault that it went badly?"

"You clearly haven't been on the receiving end of your flirting, then."

"You like it, don't lie."

"I don't have to lie," George says as he dips his hands into the cool water. He pauses for a second and realizes what it sounded like. "And I meant that I don't have to lie about not liking it because it's true. Just to clarify."

"Sure, George. That's why yesterday you were begging me to tell you another pick-up line."

"I wasn't begging! I was curious to see if you had better ones and you clearly don't," George defends himself. A large horseshoe crab crawls near him and he drags a finger down its rough shell.

"Okay, how's this one," Clay said and he turns to George, who was too invested in petting the crab before it walked away again. "George, look at me. This one will work if you look at me."

"Then why would I want to look?"

"Are you that easy then?"

"No! I'm saying I don't want to look if you're just going to win."

"So, you're saying I'll win?" God, George can hear the cocky smile in his voice. He rolls his eyes and flicks water at his friend, finally looking at him.

"There, I'm looking."

"What a beautiful sight," Clay teases and George bites his tongue hard.

"You're an idiot. Now just say it already so we can go back to the crabs."

"Okay, touch my arm." Clay holds out his elbow to George.

"Why would I-"

"Stop questioning things, just do it!" Clay yells with a laugh.

"You'll get fish water on you though!"

"Stop being worried about me and just poke me," Clay said and George gives a disgusted groan as he pokes his wet finger against Clay's arm.

"Okay?"

"Now I can tell my friends I've been touched by an angel." Clay said and he shoots George another wink. George throws his head back and laughs, shaking his head at the terrible line.

"Awful. Just terrible."

"You're blushing, though," Clay points out, sticking his hands in the water as a dogfish glides by them. It was mildly true, George's face was hot from the comment, but he wasn't about to lose.

"It's the lighting!"

"Okay, sure."

"Whatever," George said and they stay at the pool for a while, poking the animals and listening to the employee ramble facts about the animals they see in the tank. They eventually move on, shaking water from their hands and stalking over to the large tanks and taking a seat on the cushioned bench.

Clay twisted around to look at the tank behind them, eyeing a nurse shark as it swims passed them. His face was glowing in the blue light from the tank and mixing with the purple light above them, eyes shining with relaxation and happiness. George couldn't look away. He knew he should, but it was looking at a car wreck. A very pretty car wreck.

"Hey, George," Clay said, point up to a fish with a pointy nose and a gross olive color. "That would be you if you were a fish."

George blinks out of his trance, realizing his friend was waiting for a reaction. George forced out a small laugh and tried to still his racing heart and shakey hands.

"I think that would be you if you were a fish," George finally responds. He gestures to an elegant green fish darting between the coral, scales reflecting rainbow under the light.

"What? How?"

George seizes the moment. "You're both pretty."

He can visibly see Clay shortcircuit for a moment, mouth falling slack and eyes widening, but he quickly composes himself with a gentle laugh and an eye roll.

"I thought you said you can't flirt?"

"I can't. I'm certain that's as good as it's going to get," George said. He was filled with adrenaline and had a drunk rush of satisfaction. Yeah, he showed Clay.

"Well at least now I know for sure you're still in with the bet."

"Why wouldn't I be?"

"You seemed very awkward with the whole thing," Clay shrugs. George turns to face the tank again with a small smile.

"That's because I don't have flirting competitions often. Especially with friends."

Clay throws an arm around George. "Nah, we're good- wait. Do you see that?"

"If this is another one of your tricks then-"

"No! Look at the mermaid."

George looks at the tank across from them, feeling the secure weight of Clay's arm around him still, and he spots the girl swimming around the tank. Her purple tail flared out around her and she stroked some of the shark's backs as she swam by. She looked young, definitely around their age. She was also gorgeous in the water, brown hair spilling out around her as she stops and faces the gathering crowd.

Clay gives a low whistle as she goes to the bottom of the tank to greet some kids.

"What?" George asks his friend. Clay turns his head, but his eyes don't leave the girl.

"Hm? Oh, nothing. She's good though," he says. He peels his arm off George and leans forward more. "Really good."

"Don't be a creep, Clay."

"I'm not! I am admiring the amount of effort it takes to be an underwater performer."

"Okay. Just wipe the drool from your mouth and maybe I'll believe you," George said. The mermaid was headed back up to the surface, and he snuck a glance at his friend. This man really watched her go all the way up and out of sight before he responded.

"Aw, are you jealous, George?" Clay teases, looking at his friend's face.

"Don't call me that and no," George says but he looks back to the tank to avoid eye contact. This was ridiculous. Being a mermaid wasn't even that cool anyway, she probably doesn't even know how to code.

The mermaid returns but George can still feel Clay's burning gaze on the side of his face.

"Stop looking at me! The mermaids back, look at her."

"No."

"Wha- okay," George said, giving up arguing. If Clay wanted to stare, let him stare. He didn't care. Not like he was sweating and fighting a smile under his eyes.

Alas, Clay did eventually turn away after a minute but he suggested they leave the show and head back to the town. George was surprised but glad to leave. The ride back into town was filled with

blasted music, warm air leaking in from open windows, and voices breaking from singing over the loud wind.

They both felt whole and content driving back to town, their hands stacked on top of each other on the gear shift, as Clay threw more pick-up lines and George would make gagging noises with a smile. And you know something? His opinion did change about aquariums. He decided he liked them a lot that day.

As the sun set on George's fourth day, he took his first step onto Florida's warm sand. The evening was beautiful even though the boys spent their day holed up in Clay's apartment due to how hot it was that day, but the temperature dropped a bit and a nice breeze picked up as the day ended.

"Thank god it cooled off," Clay said, stretching his arms over his head as they walk down the beach.

"I still feel hot," George says back. Warm water rushes up and gathers at their ankles as they walk side by side, Clay's knuckles brushing briefly against George's. He puts his hands in his pockets.

"You get used to it after a while."

"That's because you grew up in this weather."

"And you're acting like England doesn't get hot."

"Yeah, but not this hot! I seriously felt like I was being cremated or something," George protests and Clay laughs over the hiss of the waves.

"Okay, you big baby. Stay here for a minute, I'll be right back."

George turns and watches Clay's back as he walks away. "What, you're just going to leave me here?"

"You'll be fine!" Clay calls behind him with a dismissive wave of his hand.

"How do you know that? I'm in Florida and I've heard stories!" George yells back and he starts to follow his friend, but Clay turns around and starts walking backward.

"Stay. There. I'll be back in a few." Clay said and points his finger at his friend with a sly grin. "Don't talk to the crackheads and you'll be okay!"

George watches in disbelief as his friend walks up to the sidewalk of the town and disappear in it. He really just left George, a foreigner, on the Florida coast to fend for himself. Sure it was for a few minutes, but a lot of things could happen in a few minutes. He could be kidnapped in a few minutes.

George sighs heavily and takes a seat on the soft sand, staring out to the sea. It was weird to think that he and Clay shared the same ocean, they both saw the same waters at different points in their lives. It did feel different here though. It felt like the water was so much more open and usable, not just a pretty sight to see and visit.

George takes a deep breath of the salty air as another gust of wind blows and he looks across to the horizon where fluffy yellow clouds floated above the sea. As much as he was scared of Florida and the people, he was definitely going to miss it. Only a few more days left with Clay before he returned to dull London.

"What are you thinking about?" Clay's voice says above him. George tilts his head far back to look at his friend, who was holding tall cups in his hands.

"Nothing much. What do you have?" George says and he reaches up to take one of the cups so

Clay can sit next to him.

"Milkshakes!"

"That's what you abandoned me for? Milkshakes?"

"I didn't abandon you," Clay rolls his eyes and elbows George. "I just realized where we were and I figured I would treat us to a cool refreshment after a long, hot day."

"You sound like an advertisement guy," George laughs.

"I'll take that as a compliment! But try it, it's good."

"I know it's good. I like milkshakes."

"Yeah, but you haven't had this type of milkshake."

"There are different types?"

"Okay look- just drink it before it melts," Clay said. George shrugs and takes a small sip. It was good, but it tasted like any other shake George has had. However, seeing Clay watch him with a hidden excitement, he decides to switch up his answer.

"Oh wow! That is really good," George smiles at his friend. It wasn't lying, technically.

Clay grins and looks out to the sea. "I told you!"

"Sure you did," George said and he takes another sip as he looks at the rolling water, the sun dissolving down into the sea. "Quite the view huh?"

He can see Clay study him for a second, his green eyes outlining George's face and a ghost smile on his lips. Clay takes a gulp of his shake before answering.

"George, you can't even see the colors."

"I don't need to. I know it's pretty."

"Oh, so you'll say that about a sunset but you won't say that to me?"

"Yes because if I said it to you, I would be lying." George retorts.

"Unbelievable. You were doing so well yesterday."

"Well, you were never doing well to begin with."

"George!"

George turns to Clay with a smile around his straw. "It's true! Your flirting style fucking sucks."

"You're so dumb."

"At least I didn't forget to book my friend a hotel."

Clay scoffs but doesn't say anything, looking back out the water. George was happy that he got the last word in, but it was kind of odd that Clay didn't deny it. He was usually good about getting George to shut up, but since George arrived, he seemed to be relaxing his jabs.

"It's like a light pink right now," Clay interrupts George's thoughts and points over to the horizon. "But then the clouds are like this really intense orange."

"What?"

"The sun is this bright yellow and the sky above us is like a dull blue-"

"Clay-"

"And the colors are reflecting in the water-"

"Clay! What are you doing?" George said.

"I'm describing the sky for you, sweetheart."

George makes a face. "Don't call me that."

"What? Pet names don't sit right with you?"

"No, they do. Just not when you say them," George said and he takes a long sip of his drink. It was long melted at this point but he did it to hide the creeping smile on his lips and it would drown the butterflies in his stomach.

"You're an idiot."

"Hey, don't get mad because you're losing to me," he said and he lays back on the sand before adding: "And I'm not even flirting."

"Please, I'm not losing. I can read you like a book, dude."

George closes his eyes, unbothered. "Hm, I highly doubt you can."

"How do you know?"

Because Clay would know for a fact that the flirting is having a strong effect on George. But Clay clearly didn't know this because he would've just stopped doing it once he realized. After all, Clay has only been interested in girls as far as George knew- so having his best friend fall for him would've for sure made him stop.

"I just do," George responds heavily, completely relaxed with the warm sand under him and fresh air. Clay shifts next to him, leaning back on his elbows and watches the sun dip behind the ocean.

"By the way, I've never seen pink or orange before," George says after a few minutes. He sits up and stares at Clay, who had his head tipped back again and eyes closed. "But I do appreciate the effort to describe it to me."

"Anytime man."

George pauses for a moment, thinking of what to say. "I'm going to be so sandy after this."

"That's what you get for laying in the sand." Clay opens his eyes and the two stare at each other, George feeling a small exchange pass between them but he didn't know what it was.

In an effort to break the connection, he shakes his head around and causes the sand to fall around him.

"George- hey!" Clay wheezes and he blocks himself from the sand being flung at him. George grins and leans forward to him, ruffling his hair so more sand lands on Clay.

"That was for calling me sweetheart," George says triumphantly as Clay starts to brush his shorts and shirt off.

"Yeah? Well, this-" He turns and shoves George down in the sand, shooting up with a playful grin. "-was for throwing sand on me."

"Clay!" George yells angrily, but a giggle bubbles up in his throat. He stands up and starts walking towards his friend, sand blowing off of him, and Clay picks up to a jog.

"George-" his friend starts to say before turning around and sprinting down the beach, catching George completely off guard. He laughs to himself and takes off after his friend once the sand settles and he tries desperately to reach to grab the back of Clay's t-shirt.

"Come here!" George calls to him as they run through the water, kicking it up and back into their faces. Clay takes a sharp turn and George trips on a dip in the sand, rolling down into the water but he stands back up and continues his chase for his friend. His hair was dropping seawater in his eyes and down his face.

"George-" Clay says again with a wheeze, looking back at his soaking friend with a smile so bright it put the sun to shame. George feels his legs pump faster, heart racing from adrenaline and hidden emotions, and he snags Clay's arm and pulls.

Clay halts to a stop and falls back against George with a small yelp of surprise. George keeps a tight grip on his friend's arm but uses his other hand to turn Clay towards him, and Clay's wild eyes are looking directly into George's.

"HA!" George shrieks and he pulls his hands back, realizing he was holding his friend for a moment too long. "I got you!"

"I let you get me because I felt bad you fell!"

"No excuses, I'm just better at running than you are."

"I. Let. You. Get. Me." Clay stresses and George laughs over him, too high off of victory and he didn't even care he had sand sticking to him. Clay may be better at fighting in Minecraft, but George put him in his place when it came to real life.

George continued laughing and he didn't even notice Clay take a step towards him. But once he did, his laughter died in his throat and he held his breath because holy fuck why was he so close. Clay was still panting slightly and George could see small grains of sand on his cheeks like they were freckles. He held his breath despite still panting.

Clay doesn't move or do anything, he doesn't even blink. He just stares into George's eyes with an expression of joy but with a painful sorrow mixed. Like he knew something that George didn't but he was trying to cover it up in the happy moment.

"Are you...okay?" George asks him quietly and he feels sweaty. He wanted Clay to back up because his feet wouldn't listen. Clay leaned a bit closer, eye narrowing. George's heart stutters. He wouldn't do that, right?

"Boop!" Clay said as he jabs his nose into George's.

"Ow! What the fuck, Clay?!" George yells at him, holding his nose. It didn't hurt but he needed to hide his blush somehow.

Clay laughs loudly. "Oh my god, your face. Your face was priceless, George! Holy shit, I wish I could've taken a picture!"

"Ugh, whatever." George groans and Clay was still laughing by the time they strolled back into the town.

"Dude, oh my god- you looked so scared! What? Did you think I was going to kill you?" Clay says.

"I didn't know what you were doing!"

"Did you think I was going to kiss-"

"No! No, absolutely not. No." George snaps at him and Clay chuckles a bit, laughter fizzling out.

"Okay, okay. Sorry, touchy subject."

"You're so annoying."

That earns George a small wheeze and an elbow bump which was Clay's language for 'Hey man, don't worry. We're cool, it's all good'. George lets it go, though. No use in thinking about something that might not even be there right?

However, unknown to George, Clay was thinking about that something.

As much as Clay loved to see George struggle to flirt, it was getting kind of sad at this point. Hell, Clay wouldn't even call it flirting. George was really just going back and forth between complimenting him and then flaming the shit out of Clay's pick-up lines, which made him really annoyed at his friend because at least he was trying. Even if he had to look up some lines.

However, Clay wasn't an idiot. He considered himself to be the exact opposite, in fact. He knew George lost the bet by this point but he didn't say anything because, to him, it wasn't a competition. It was a lame excuse to communicate his true feelings without touching a nerve with George. Was it slightly manipulative? Yes. Did it work out in their favors though? Absolutely.

Clay woke George's ass up in the middle of the night, practically dragging him out of the apartment and back out on the beach, to have his friend experience the Florida night sky. Although his feelings were strong for his friend, he still wanted to make sure George got to experience every aspect of his small Florida town since he knew George would do the same if he ever went to England.

"I'm not in the mood to go swimming," George said with a dramatic yawn as the ocean comes into view.

"Don't worry, we're not," Clay says. They listen as the crash of the waves grows louder. There was a decent amount of people still out from the nearby clubs and bars, stumbling along the sidewalk under yellow streetlights and laughing loudly. There were also a few people like George and Clay, walking silently side by side one another and talking in low voices.

"Why are we here?" His friend asks as Clay lays out the blanket on the sand. The tide was high so they were pushed up to where the sidewalk meets the beach, away from anyone else.

"Stargaze, duh," Clay responds, taking a seat. "Florida has some of the clearest skies at night, especially in this area."

They both look up at the inky sky. Clay was right, the stars were scattered across the sky like spilled glitter and a dazzling moon sat above the sea. There were a few other people walking the beach with flashlights- hunting the shore for late-night shell hunting or fishing. But George felt like they were completely alone together, in their own little bubble, as he relaxes a bit into Clay's shoulder.

"I haven't looked at the stars in a long time."

"I mean, can you even see them?" Clay teases, giving George a gentle nudge.

"Yes, I can see the stars idiot. I'm colorblind, not blind blind," George laughs.

"Okay, well if you can see-" Oh god, what is he about to say. "-then do you believe in love at first sight? Or should I walk by again?" Clay said. George sits there for a moment, still facing the stars and he shakes his head. He felt that dreadful creep of heat on his cheeks and that bubbly feeling of a laugh in his chest.

He snorts and buries his face in his shoulder, a wicked grin spreading on his face.

"That was so stupid-"

"I win!"

George looks at him, grin still on his face. "What? No, you don't."

"I totally do, dude! I can feel the heat from your face here, stupid!"

"It's not hot!" George protests as a cooling breeze swept through. Clay internally adores the view of his smiling friend with his hair blowing gently.

"Just admit I won! I totally made you blush, just accept it."

"No way! If anything I won."

"How?! You flirted with me, like, twice."

"At the aquarium! Don't think I didn't see you do that dumb face."

"What dumb face?"

"The face- you know exactly what I'm talking about! I can see you smiling!" George says and he slaps Clay in the arm.

"And I can see you blushing! Just say I win already so we can, peacefully please, continue looking at the stars," Clay said and George groans, looking back to the heavens. He listens to the rhythmic hiss of the waves, his heart beating with them, and his face cools.

"Well, I'm waiting," his friend nudges him again.

"Keep waiting, then. I'm not saying anything," George scoffs and he has to bite the inside of his cheek to keep from smiling again. It would be a dead give away.

"You're still blushing- I can see it, George."

"Oh my fucking god- look!" George said and he takes Clay's hand, slapping it on his cheek, and he looks at his friend dead in the eyes. "I'm. Not. Blushing."

Clay looks at him, eyes scanning his face rapidly. George begins to pull his hand away from his face, but Clay slides it under his chin and tilts it up. Before George could blink, Clay leans in and kisses him gently.

George sits there like an idiot for a second, eyes staring at Clay's closed ones and he feels himself slip under a thick wave of affection. He kisses back, hand cupping Clay's jaw. It was a short kiss, Clay pulling away but staying close to George.

"I'm... sorry?" Clay says carefully. George knew he had a shell shocked face or that he looked brain dead, body unwilling to move and mouth open slightly. "George, please say something."

"...I don't know. What to say." George said eventually. He was still reeling from the kiss and he had no idea what to make of his friend now. This was a big WTF moment in his mind.

"Did I fuck up?" Clay said. George can hear the panic in his voice and Clay backs fully away from him so he was halfway on the sand.

"No?"

"You sound uncertain."

"I am?"

"Okay, well can you at least give me a good or bad reaction here?" Clay said. His friend had a completely neutral reaction to that. Sure he kissed back but his reaction after made Clay feel like he read George all wrong.

George stares dumbly at him before snapping out of whatever trance he was in, shoving his palms in his eyes. "What the fuck? What the fuck. What did we just do?"

"We...kissed?"

"Okay. Okay!" George says with a laugh. His friend was losing it, holy shit. If Clay knew he was going to mess with him that badly he would've held his feelings back.

"Are you ok-"

"Yes!" George snaps. Clay's eyebrows shoot up in surprise.

"Okay, whoa. Look I'm sorry but I thought-"

"You thought what? Why did you kiss-"

"Because I like you! Okay? Is that what you want to hear? I like you, George," Clay admits. George falls silent again.

"So the flirting-"

"Was real. I like you."

"Yeah, I heard the first time."

"Are you going to give me an answer or continue to make me feel bad?"

"I don't-"

"If you say 'I don't know' one more time, I'm leaving you here." Clay jokes drily. But his nerves seriously couldn't handle another 'I don't know'.

"I guess you win then," George says so simply. He digs for his phone out of his pocket and shoves it into Clay's hands. "Call whoever, I don't care."

"George that's not an answer-"

"Yes! Yes. Yes." George looks back up to the sky, becoming very interested in the patterns.

"Yes what?"

"Yes, I like you too! Jesus- you're an idiot, Clay."

"You sound so happy to like me."

"Shut up."

They sit in complete silence for a moment, Clay turning George's phone in his hands as his friend continues to gaze up. He places the phone on George's knee. He didn't want it anymore.

"What are we?" George asks quietly. "I thought you liked girls."

"I do, but they aren't you." Clay said. A part of him felt a huge weight lift since he knew George's answer, but he still felt so guilty for kissing George like that. It was completely uncalled for.

"Interesting."

Silence.

"I mean, what do you think we are?" Clay asks his friend. George finally turns to him, pretty brown eyes looking at him.

"I'm not sure. I'm too tired to even process things right now."

"Ah, okay."

More silence.

"But I wouldn't be-" George pauses for a heavy sigh. "- so opposed if we...you know... again?"

Clay quirks an eyebrow at him, trying not to show how fast his heart was racing and how nervous he was. George looks back at him, face stern and he wasn't backpedaling, so what was Clay supposed to do? Leave a pal hanging?

As soon as Clay gives a quick nod, George is there and kissing him again. Clay takes George's hand and intertwines their fingers, placing it on the blanket next to them and his free hand brushes George's cheek. His friend's lips were salty from the air and the moonlight lights up his face in a heavenly glow. Even if nothing came from this, Clay was happy to have this moment in his memory.

That was the last time they kissed that night though, both mildly out of breath after and exhausted with scrambled brains. They watched the stars move slowly across the sky for a while, laying in a steady silence with occasional quick conversations. It wasn't awkward, surprisingly, and they didn't talk about it. They didn't need to. The walk home with their hands locked together said all the words for them.

Chapter Notes

Hey guys!!! just a quick note- this fic isn't intended to be a lengthy one with a huge plot like Chasing Snowflakes. This is just a quick feel good fic with summer romance :)

Though Florida was one of the more pretty states, it's weather was just as crazy and unpredictable as the people living it.

Loud rain slammed onto the roof of the apartment that day. Or at least George thought it was day, the clouds made the sky too dark to tell. Thunder rumbled above them which, at first, scared George a bit but Clay seemed unbothered by it all. In fact, Clay seemed angry that it decided to rain.

"Of course it starts to rain," his friend grumbled to the window, forehead pressed against it. George was sitting on the couch, coffee mug wrapped in his hands, and the TV playing mutely in the back.

"You can't control the weather, Clay. But it is pretty annoying," George said. It was his last day before he had to leave and he really didn't want to spend it inside. He wanted to see and do more in this small town, but that was clearly too much to ask.

"Man, I was going to take us downtown to this restaurant and then there was this small arcade I used to go to-"

"It's okay, Clay. I can always come back some other time."

"Yeah, but I wanted you to get the whole experience in one visit," Clay said and takes a seat next to George.

"I haven't experienced Florida rain before," George tries to encourage him, jabbing an elbow to his friend.

"Yeah but you live in England and it's always raining."

"Not really?"

"Whatever," Clay said. His friend slouches down in the couch, mood obviously killed from the weather. George was annoyed, but he could at least understand the weather was this uncontrollable force and they could at least make the most of it.

Standing up and walking to the door, George decided he wasn't going to let a little rain ruin his last day with Clay. He stepped out on to the slippery stairway as rain hit his bare arms and he, carefully of course, makes his way down to the flooded sidewalk.

"George! What the hell are you doing?" Clay calls to him, peering out the front door. Patches sat next to his legs and the two watch George stand out in the rain.

"What? It's just rain," he says holding his hand out to feel the raindrops. "No use in letting it ruin

our day together right?"

Clay thinks for a moment, eyes going from the stormy sky to his friend before ducking back inside the house.

"Oh. Great." George said to himself. He got soaked for nothing and now he was cold. His friend could've at least encouraged him to come back inside-

"Here! You might want this if you don't want to get sick," Clay said to George, making his way through the rain with his gray lifeguard hoodie on and George's cradled in his arm. George shrugs it on, feeling slightly warmer even though the rainwater was just leaking right through.

Clay winks at him, flipping his hood up over his blonde hair. "Now we really match!"

"Interesting," George looks down at their hoodies and smiles. He knew he made a good call telling Clay to grab one too. He flips up his hood too and leans back to the sky. The rain felt good in the summer heat and he felt like he was being personally cleansed by mother earth.

Clay jumped into a large puddle, not caring that his shoes and socks were going to be wet after. It was hard to care about these simple things when he knew he was just going to have to return back to a George-less life tomorrow. This wasn't what he had in mind for the day, but it worked for him.

He kicked up water to George, egging him on for a reaction. However, George continued to stand there with his face up and his eyes closed. He didn't even flinch as the water hit his legs. He just peacefully stood there and enjoyed the moment, raindrops sliding down his face and a small smile on his lips.

Yeah, Clay kissed those lips. He was pretty proud of himself.

"I can feel you looking at me, weirdo."

Clay snaps out of his trance and goes back to walking in puddles. "You look dumb just standing there though."

"At least I'm not throwing water on people."

"Oh, so you did feel that?"

"How could I not? It's cold as hell," George shivers, looking back at Clay.

"Are you...cold? Dude, it's like eighty degrees out."

"My clothes got wet!"

"Oh my god, I am so sorry to hear that!" Clay said in mock pity. George's friend strides over and wraps strong arms around him, small pats on the shoulder. "You poor thing, you must be dying of hypothermia."

He knew it was supposed to be a joke but George wasn't cold anymore. He felt secure in Clay's arms, forehead pressed against Clay's chest, and he felt the dull thud of his friend's heartbeat. He felt the heat of a blush roll through and, again, he was grateful for the cooling rain but he swears he heard it sizzle against his exposed cheek. He didn't register how long Clay was holding him like that. Not even noticing that he himself relaxed and wrapped his own arms around his friend and that Clay held him just a bit closer and tighter.

"I didn't realize you were a huggy person," Clay said as he rests his chin on the top of his friend's soft hair.

"You give good hugs," George shrugs and he pulls away from Clay, not wanting to make things awkward by continuing.

The rain eases up some and the sweet smell lingers around them. Clay looks down at his soggy clothes. It was hard to believe he gave good hugs when he was all wet- George even had wet marks on his shoulders where Clay's arms rested. It was going to be really hard to say goodbye if he already felt alone when George pulled away.

"What's your issue? Why are you standing there all sad?" George said.

"I'm upset that you're leaving," Clay admits, putting his hands in his shorts pockets.

"Aw, is someone going to miss me?"

"We literally said we liked each other last night, how can I not?"

"Look- okay," George said with a laugh. His cheekbones were pink.

"Oo! At loss for words, are we?"

"Shut up, you literally just hugged me for, like, two hours."

"Two hours-" Clay wheezes. "Two hours? Dude, it wasn't even a minute."

"Whatever, weirdo."

"Stop calling me a weirdo!"

"I will once you stop acting like one."

"Just shut up, stupid."

"Don't call me stupid!"

"Then don't call me a weirdo!"

"Gah, you are so annoying to deal with."

"Ah, but you like me-" A hand clamps over Clay's mouth before he can finish his sentence.

"Shut. Up." George says and he pauses to make sure Clay actually stopped talking. "Okay, I'm going to remove my hand and we are going to change topics and- DID YOU JUST LICK MY HAND?!" George shrieks and he yanks his hand away.

"Haha! Never fails," Clay laughs as his friend wipes his palm on Clay's arm.

"You're an idiot."

"Sure I am."

"Please stop talking."

"Make me, dumb dumb," Clay jokes with an eye roll.

But George took jokes very seriously, as you can see. As the rain fell around them, George tugged on the sides of Clay's hoodie and pulled him in. He quickly found Clay's lips and his stomach went crazy with butterflies, the world around them was muffled and all he could focus on was Clay. He tasted like summer and the rain. Clay's hands touch George's cheeks and wiped the water from them gently, angling their heads to deepen the kiss and George's mind went blank. Clay could really kiss and George was melting. Needless to say, that shut them both up.

A clap of thunder made them jump and look up at the sky, the rain falling harder suddenly.

"I guess we should go back in, huh?" Clay says, shielding his eyes from the rain as he looked up. George could barely understand what he said, hands zapping with electricity and heart filled with warmth.

"Yeah," George responds. At this point, the gray hoodies turned black from the rain and George could see Clay's teeth chattering slightly. "Let's go."

Following getting changed into dry clothes and brewing cups of warm drinks, the two of them leaned on each other as they watched the rain pour outside with Clay's protective arm around George. More movies played quietly on the TV but neither of them paid attention, playing a game stealing quick kisses on cheeks and foreheads whenever they heard thunder. For George's last day, he was pretty happy with how it turned out. He just hoped his boyfriend would take him to that restaurant next time, though.

Chapter Notes

WHOOOOAAAAA sorry for breaking the daily update thing- between the ~drama~ and a pretty nasty fight w my bf, i was not in the mood to write fluff and i didn't want to give you guys something that seemed forced.

also i hope you guys got the chasing snowflakes reference with the ice skating, i used a lotta brain cells trying to come up w that

you made it to the end though!!!! i hope you guys enjoyed it and i hope it lifted some spirits, it was really fun to write <3 ily guys and thank you so much for all the love and support on the fics, it means the world :)

Waking up his sleeping boyfriend so he can catch his flight really sucked and he felt bad scheduling such an early flight. George knocked softly on Clay's bedroom door before slowly creeping in and towards the sleeping lump on the bed. Clay was an ugly sleeper with his mouth hanging open and body twisted weirdly under the covers. George pulled his phone from his pocket and snapped a quick picture with an evil grin.

"Ha, blackmail," he says softly, admiring the beautiful picture of his knocked out boyfriend. Boyfriend. Boyfriend. George was never going to get tired of calling Clay that. Boyfriend.

He takes a seat on the edge of the bed, leaning against Clay, and he jabs a hard finger into his shoulder. "Wake up sleepy head. You have to drive me to the airport."

"Mmno," Clay mumbles.

"Clay, c'mon."

"Just...stay here....for a while..." Clay said through sleep. He moves blindly and finds George's torso, anchoring him to the bed by wrapping strong arms around him.

George flicks his head. "I can't, I have bills to pay and a dog to take care of back home."

"No you don't," Clay nuzzles his forehead against George's back.

"I do," George responds, twisting his head to look at Clay behind him. "I'm sorry."

"...I'll be up in five," Clay sighs, and George runs a quick hand through his blonde hair. He bends down and plants a kiss on his forehead.

"Thank you," he says.

Twenty minutes later, George was practically shoving Clay into the driver's seat and his suitcase in the trunk. They were supposed to leave ten minutes ago since Clay insisted he would just throw on clothes and deal with everything else after he dropped George off, but that was a lie. Clay instead wasted the time distracting George by kissing him and pulling him into long hugs, trying to convince him to stay just a bit longer. The sad thing was that George almost gave in. But then he

caught a glimpse of the clock on the stove and remembered he had other responsibilities.

"Drive you idiot!" George shouted at his boyfriend, who conveniently decided to actually follow the rule of the road this time.

"I am! Look-" Clay wiggles the steering wheel, causing the car to swerve slightly.

"Not funny, I could miss my plane because someone decided to be annoying!"

"It's a little funny."

"Whatever. If I miss my plane you're paying for the next ticket back."

"Seriously? If that means you get to stay longer, then let me just-" Clay takes his foot off the gas and the car starts to gradually slow down. George almost bursts a blood vessel.

"You're so annoying. Go! Please," George groaned and his boyfriend chuckles, giving in. Clay places his hand on top of George's on the console between them, holding it tightly. Deep down, George wanted to miss his plane. He wanted Clay to keep messing around so he wouldn't have to go back to a Clay-less England and miss out on the warm summer sun and soft beaches.

The airport eventually came into view and George blinked and suddenly he was standing at the glass doors with his suitcase being tugged behind him. Clay was by his side, hand still clutching his tightly, and softly talking about how shitty the airport's decor was. George knew it was to distract them both from the hard goodbye and he appreciated a lot.

They stop in front of the counters to take George's suitcase to his plane and Clay turns to him.

"It's been fun, Georgie-" Clay said and he pulls George in a warm hug, pressing his mouth into his boyfriend's brown hair. "-Now get the fuck out of my country."

George laughs but it sounds more like choking because his throat was so tight. He just got someone that meant the world to him and now he was going to leave him. He hugs Clay just a bit tighter and tries to burn the scent of his boyfriend's cologne into his brain.

"You don't have to tell me twice, I hate it here," George mumbles into Clay's shoulder. He feels the shoulder bounce with a small laugh.

"Funny, I thought I did everything to not make you hate it."

"It's too hot. Everything else was good, though."

"That's it? That's your only complaint?"

George pulls back to look at Clay's face. "Yes! It was too hot or 'muggy'. Whatever you call it."

"Okay, that doesn't count. I can't change the weather!"

"Hm, well you have until I come back to learn. Which is going to be a while..."

"Hey, come on," Clay says softly, reading George's upset face. "Don't be like that. You'll come again. Or maybe I could come to England and you can show me around."

"Yeah, it'll be my turn to give you a tour of the town."

"Any special place in mind?"

George pauses and thinks. "No, but if you come in the winter there's this pond that freezes over. We could go skating or something."

"Sounds awesome," Clay smiles at George. He softens a bit and smiles back.

"I guess I should go now," he sighs, looking to the man behind the desk.

"Yeah..." Clay said. He scratches the back of his neck and looks away. Time to let him go. "Call me when you get home? If you don't pass out right after."

"I promise to call you," George snorts. The two gaze at each other, Clay ignoring the hot prick behind his eyes and he places his hands on George's shoulders, leaning down for a final kiss. Clay can feel George's lips tug up in a small smile and kiss him back with warm hands touching his cheeks, sending jolting sparks to his heart. God, Clay was so happy he didn't seriously fuck up their relationship. George made him so happy- he had really fallen hard for his best friend.

Clay holds George's hand as he begins to walk away, grip slowly loosening and fingers falling apart until just their fingertips brush, then he's gone. George walks to the counter and Clay watches with a clenched heart as his suitcase disappears with that stupid matching lifeguard hoodie in it. Then he feels his heart split open as George gives a final wave goodbye over his shoulder, watery smile on his face, and Clay waves back and doesn't stop until George disappears into the airport.

He stands there for a moment. He felt lonely and weird, even though this was the norm for him. People walk by him with glances since it was kind of weird to just stand in the middle of the airport and stare into space. He snaps out of it and shoves his hands in his pockets. He walks out to the car and cranks the music as he drives, trying to replicate the memory of driving back from the aquarium. The moment where they sang and sang until their voices broke and their throats hurt and the moment when Clay decided he really liked George.

Clay waited all day by his phone, checking it anytime it buzzed or lit up, while he cleaned around his apartment. When George finally did call, Clay answered it on the second ring and he felt so relieved to see George's tired face on his screen. George was back in his apartment, safe and sound, and Clay couldn't be happier to see that.

"Whoa, miss me much?" George said when Clay answered.

"Yes! Even Patches misses you," Clay pans the camera to an uninterested Patches and George laughs.

"She looks devastated."

"You know it."

"Hey, did you mean to put this in here?" George asked him and he holds up Clay's green hoodie to the camera.

"No...did you steal my hoodie, George?"

"No! I found it in here when I was unpacking," George said.

"You totally took my hoodie, you weasel. Just admit you knew you would miss me and you took one," Clay teases and he watches George's mouth drop open in shock.

"I didn't- whatever."

"Yeah, exactly." Clay said and George rolls his eyes. Clay did actually put it in there the night before George left. His suitcase was wide open on the floor in his living room, what else was he supposed to do? He just wondered how long it would take George to notice that he was 'missing' his blue hoodie.

The two talk for hours after until George's eyes slip shut during a lull in their conversation. Clay didn't get the chance to hang up though because he found himself fast asleep with George, the camera still pointing to their faces.

Clay was ready for this adventure and whatever was thrown at them. Long-distance was a crazy and unpredictable ride with a lot of trust needed. However, when he saw George run to him in the English airport with that familiar green hoodie seven months later, he had a strong feeling they were going to be just fine.

End Notes

pardon any grammar or spelling errors! :)

Disclaimers:

i do not live in Florida and this town is completely fictional. excuse any inaccuracies!

!!!! I love and respect both Dream and George and this is no way meant to make them uncomfortable, this is purely for entertainment. I will remove any content that they deem weird or uncomfortable to them, I do not want to hurt their friendship in any way. !!!!!

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